

THE KINGDOM OF
HEAVEN



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The Kingdom of heaven



THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

[A REVELATION]

“Say unto them, The Kingdom of
God is come nigh unto you.”

Luke x., 9.



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PREFACE

ON sending forth his disciples to proclaim the good tidings that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," anticipating the probable rejection of their testimony, Jesus said, "Nevertheless be ye sure of this, the Kingdom of God is come nigh." Long before his disciples were able to discern the true spiritual significance of that kingdom, to them it was 'given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,' for they were witnesses of their outward manifestation long before they were spiritually prepared to understand, or enter into, that state of blessedness through purity of heart and faith in God. No argument accompanied their announcement of the glad tidings, they simply proclaimed the good news; the attestation of its truth was independent of their own minds.

A claim so overwhelming to the common order of thought as that of open heavenly intercourse is established, not through the deductions of human reason, but by "the word of faithful witnesses," and the evidence of its truth is inherent in the very nature of that word, discerned through spiritual insight. For a

PREFACE

revelation of heavenly things must necessarily appeal to a spiritual consciousness: "he that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

The contents of this little book are selections from the record of a series of experiences extending over several years—from 1881 to 1886. If it be asked by what means these words, or teachings, which constitute a revelation, were received, the answer is, by means similar to those which in the Old Testament constitute a channel of "prophecy," and in the New Testament are designated "manifestations of the Holy Ghost."

The selections herein given are confined to teachings relating to the kingdom of heaven and the spiritual life; as such they are of the order of that divine revelation which, with long intervals of silence, runs through the ages and flows on forever, for "there is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God."

Easter, 1894.

“ THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS
AT HAND ”

[A REVELATION]

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“ Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”

I. Thessalonians, v., 19-21.

“ Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation ? ”

Epistle to the Hebrews, i., 14.

MINISTERING SPIRITS.

. . . “If you abandon yourselves to the influence you may extend your life into our world and share in the pure light of Spirit, but when absorbed in temporal things you are separated from us as by an impassable wall. We would pour into your hearts the Light of Day, the brightness of that spiritual light which enfolds the earnest seeker—for are not we your ministering spirits? But often are we compelled to drive back into the sanctuary of thought our desires for you.

“In the light that now shines on you through this communion is already fulfilled for you the promise of a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. For you may now look back on the time when you gazed intently into the future, as if there alone lay your hope, while around you, unperceived, was a possible, a real heaven. Cherish especially the thought of a present Eternity; it will refine and uplift the mind, and give a meaning and use to every thought and act. Live always in the Light, for they to whom God is an ever-shining Sun will reap a rich harvest of blessing in this vale of struggle, as

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well as in the brightness of the Heavenly Land. The lesson which abides with us here, is that of realising, continually, the presence of God, in us and about us. For they who are born of the Spirit are already at home in the Father's House, and if it be but the lower rooms we are in, nevertheless it is the Father's House."

[In reply to a question.]

"We all stand on the shores of a boundless sea; we see in one light, you in another; the infinite is equally before us in this life, as in yours. Even as your eyes are dim, and your hands feeble, so the veil of our imperfection is suspended between us and the vast unknown. We press forward, and still a beyond lies before us. With constant endeavour we grasp, and it eludes us, but something remains to bless us as a foundation for more."

Are you permitted to reveal sacred things, as in the past?

"Until the time is at hand for a distinct revelation, before it becomes possible for it to be a revelation, and after the ground is prepared, then, and only then, will He who sows come, and give the good gift. We know this to be true from experience. The Light, were it shown you without a preparation of mind and heart, would be too strong for you to bear, and God shows His mercy no less in withholding the Light than in bringing you into it. In His infinite mercy He will open your eyes day by day, until you shall be prepared

MINISTERING SPIRITS

to receive His own words, by His own Messengers, those who come out from His immediate Presence. While you thus wait the Life is poured into your souls, and in a moment your growth in grace may be greater than you can know.

“We see clearly that man’s only hope of Life is by patiently enduring, through faith, until he shall receive the blessing which comes from God speaking to the soul directly ; and if you listen to this inner voice, and obey its dictates, you will make a greater advance than you can measure. For God’s own word, that speaks to you through the heart, is surer than any voice which may be heard ; surer than spoken words, for in these you have but the interpretation of the thought, while with God’s voice in the conscience you have His words free from any impurity, which is mixed with all outward expression.

“When you have once seen the Light, then the Spirit opens your minds to the apprehension of spiritual truths in a way that was before impossible, then your true life has begun, then you are numbered among God’s children and are heirs of immortality.

“The life of the Spirit is a progressive life, requiring continually the food from heaven to bring it to perfection. This food is the Light of Life ; and this is that Light which God Himself, through the operation of the Spirit, gives to man, to each as he asks, to each one as he lays himself open to the Influence, which may come to him in great abundance. No man need

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be without this Light, for it is the Great Inheritance, the common inheritance of man. When you come into this Light you may then recognise a power of thought to which the natural man is blinded. It bids you see for the first time. It calls you to take possession of your birthright and become the being your Eternal Father has destined you to be. Then, and then only, can you be said to live, to live as unto God.

“By a constant endeavour to discern those things which make for righteousness you may walk in the Spirit in many ways which are the fulfilment of the promises of God. Happy are they who dwell continually in His Presence, for their life is real, and they shall abide forever in His Kingdom and be the means of conveying to others words of Eternal Life.”

. . . .

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

[NOVEMBER 5, 1882.]

. . . “Remember that the gift is not yours, but in you. Regard it as a sacred trust, for the benefit of others as well as for yourselves. . . Calmness of mind is necessary for the development of these powers, and in preparation for the life that awaits you when the flesh is laid down. Do not fear shocks, either physical, or mental ; if accepted calmly they may be regarded as steps in the onward movement of the spirit. Growth is gradual ; in order to last it must be so ; but crises occur in all lives. . .

“We shall on this occasion be the means of conveying to you words from which life and hope may be born. The messenger will choose his own hour, but we are assured that before we leave you we shall have his words, for this is the urgent call that has brought us together now. . .

“It is but seldom, and as a great and precious blessing, for a special purpose, that the Saints commune with men. Our means of drawing to us the great and

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pure spirits is by love and veneration. We dwell much on the power of love, for it is the greatest force in this world where sympathy is slight. Love, in active exercise, is charity; and here as with you the words are true, that charity covers a multitude of sins. Love descends and broods over the weakness and sorrows of humanity. Love is the ladder by which we climb. Our weaknesses and faults fall away from us insensibly, almost without effort, when for love's pure sake we are engaged in works of love. We do not then have to strive, or labour with ourselves, but purity comes to us and faults fade away as darkness is dispelled by daylight.

“One of the blessings of this intercourse is, that love brings us to you and aids us in overcoming the many obstacles encountered in this new path, of communion with mortals. But these very efforts benefit us by strengthening our powers of manifestation in our world, and by drawing us out of ourselves they give us another motive beyond the desire to grow in our own spiritual life. In other ways we are benefited by this intercourse, of which you may gain some knowledge in the effort to raise the thought of those about you to a higher plane. We are closely united with those who, in the Earth-life, strive to do this, and thus are good and great things accomplished.

“We are filled with the earnest desire to aid you in this enlightenment. Use the opportunity, for it is

COMMUNION OF SAINTS

a question of times and seasons, of atmospheric influences, and even the fleshy atoms have something to do with it, or we could not control, as we do, the eyes, the voice, the hand. Fill the mind with spiritual thoughts, dwell upon them when rising up and lying down. When such thoughts fill your minds you need no assurance that we are beside you. But do not be disappointed if this favorable season should terminate ; it cannot be always spring. Cherish what comes, and live on it in times of drought. [*A pause.*]

“ A pure and mighty one is near you. Listen ! ”

“ To you who crave for goodness as the hart pants after the waters, I come with words of love and hope and encouragement.

“ We, by the mercy and love of God, dwell in the land of light, in the kingdom of endless ages. Here is undying life ; here the peace that passeth understanding ; here joy wanes not, here beauty withers not, here love grows not cold, for we dwell in the smile of the Face of God.

“ We, too, have been as you now are, tossed on the waves of this troublesome world. Now we stand on the eternal shore and see your peril, as the billows of trial and temptation surge around you. And we hold up to you the light of Love and Truth to guide you home. And we bid you remember that the day is coming, when in you, as in us, patience shall have wrought her perfect work, when hope shall be lost in

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fruition, and when you, too, shall know the fulness of joy that abides in the Presence of God."

[After an interval it was asked:]

From whom are these words?

"Augustine."

THE WILL OF GOD.

[JANUARY 7, 1883.]

[After reading aloud the words received on the previous occasion, the following was communicated:]

“You have called us around you by that unfailing summons, sacred to us, as to your mortal ears.

“You should be willing, and prepared, to resign yourselves to the power. For if you give us free scope we can, as you now know, soar with you into the heights of divine blessing, and probe deeply the mystery of the unseen. But a passive receptivity will not suffice. There should be more than willingness to receive ; there must be ardent desire corresponding to the boon you seek, and which we are around you to give. We aim to supply all the needful power. Others, too, of a higher order, are near you, influencing your minds to grow and expand. When you breathe that sacred Message, and when your hearts are in unison, the power called forth is greater than you can know.

“Time has been given that you might take to your hearts words which were to us, as to you, a great and wonderful blessing. No time is lost that is so used,

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for you gain as much by that means as by direct communion with the spirit world. . .

“ If your desire is for these higher gifts you will have to relinquish the lesser communion for the greater ; for many from beyond, of whom you have no knowledge, will come, hoping to influence the expression of truth. The blessing of a higher intercourse will impose on you this voluntary sacrifice as a necessity. But we can give you no higher proof of our love and interest, for thus we take you into the secret thoughts of our life here. We likewise depend on you, for without you we cannot have the direct words which holy ones from beyond bring for those in your life. . .

“ The light that we may reflect for you is not ours, it is exterior to ourselves, shining through our minds. To bring it within the compass of words, by this means, is our great difficulty. To-night we draw you into our assembled company as longing for the same blessing, in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace. All are here ; the place is a holy place, for we all await the voice of one who speaks with authority to us and to you alike. One who has ‘ heard the voice of God resounding through the ages,’ and who by faith and patience and purity has obtained an unspeakable reward.”

[*By another communing spirit :*] “ The old lesson—not he that repeateth the Name, but he that doeth the Will : that was the lesson of the Great Master. That

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is a lesson for your life, and for ours. Here we learn that Will more fully, but the perfection awaits us in a higher sphere."

[*By another :*] "Purity and self-sacrifice are the best preparation for the life to come. By self-sacrifice you may practice on Earth, by gradual steps, the work of your future eternal life, which will be a complete and perfect submission to the Will of God. For this is heaven indeed—one will, one desire ; no further temptation because all self-will has been uprooted and subdued.

" We grow gradually into this oneness of will, and the earthly stage is all part of the preparation for blessedness hereafter."

[*After a pause the following was communicated with great deliberation and calmness, as if by dictation :*]

' " Peace, good will to men.

' " Peace to the kindred of the saints, on whom shines the dawning of the Day of God.

' " Unite your wills to the Will of God, so shall your peace flow as a river, and your purification shall be perfected.

' " In this heavenly country, where the King reigns in His beauty, we follow His will, we are wholly His, for no cloud can separate us from His love. We live only for Him, we abide where He places us, we have no will but His, and He is our God forever and ever.

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‘ “ God directs your way for His own glory, which is your highest good. He will have you live and labour for Him, not seeing the fruit of your toil, content to know you are doing His work, that you prepare His way, and plough up the soil of the world for the seed of the future, knowing your record is on high. He makes of your weakness the throne of His mercy, the seat of His omnipotence. To you, and in you, He draws near, and gloom vanishes before His bright Presence.

‘ “ We, in His name, strengthen and cheer you with the promise of the home where He in His love and mercy has gathered us, and where He will surely bring all who live in love. There, in the land of eternal spring, of everlasting light, awaits you an inheritance incorruptible, an unfailing treasure, a life of perfect peace. Your waking souls can yet see only in dim vision that land of light, you can look only on the veils of the bliss to be revealed, on the shadows of the heavenly glory that overflows the paradise of God. But look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh, day by day.

‘ “ O, blessed, endless eternity, wherein shall grow continually the love of the Holy Will of God.” ’

[After a long silence the following was given in reply to questions asked :]

“ We know not the name now, but you shall learn it ; we also desire to know whence these words which

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come to us all and help our lives. In the great presence of this night we likewise are listeners, and we also are privileged to be here.

“There need be no pause in our onward and upward journey. Their desire is to strengthen us in this cause, and to renew us day by day. When we come together again make your preparation by earnest prayer, and the blessing will be given without measure. And remember us in your prayers, for we receive the blessing with you when in harmony.”

[*On a subsequent occasion the following was communicated:*] “He who came is God’s servant, who does His bidding; by him the Spirit of the Most High gains conscious access to your hearts. And by this means we receive strength, which only comes when God speaks to His children on earth. When He shall see fit to give us the higher life, the life of His saints, then shall be fulfilled in us the saying which is written—How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings.”

Who gave the last message?

“St. Thomas, the Apostle.

“They come to you with a high end to accomplish. Through this means they see a channel for the spread of God’s truth. It is by no mere chance that this has come about, but by a power beyond your own. Every gift brings its responsibility, but your strength shall be as your day. Let your hearts be filled with thanks-

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giving ; that is your acceptable sacrifice. Every note of praise in your souls finds its echo in the great harmony of rejoicing now ascending from us all. A common boon, a common gift, therefore are we united in our common praise."

[*By another, in reply to a question :*] " He who came is of that heavenly order whose mission it is to guide and protect all the heirs of eternal life. Their commission is not to single souls, but to the great family of God. Individual guardianship is by spirits of the lower spheres. The name was given for your confirmation in faith. When you have reached a further stage in spiritual progress you will not care to know the precise channel of the high communication. Your first Message was for cheer and comfort ; now you have had your first lesson in heavenly things. This, the first step, is likewise the last, for the will of God is to be done in Earth as in Heaven ; and neither in the earthly life, nor even in the higher spheres, can that lesson be perfectly learned."

[*By another :*] " When you have seen and understood these things—that is the meaning of the words of the message, ' your redemption draweth nigh.' A realisation of the meaning of the words is the evidence of this redemption. By this inward light alone can you be said to live truly, to live as unto God, the author of all that is good and true in life. No one can be said to have passed into the condition of the higher life until he feels that God himself has touched him,

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and made him live again. Then, and then only, begins the true life."

[*By another :*] "Faith alone can interpret life. Faith will solve for you the enigmas of the world : such faith as you may attain to, tinctured with spiritual sight. You may then look calmly on the trials of life, even on the mystery of pain ; for pain and discontent are the rebellion of body and mind against existing conditions. Let this be only a stimulus to bring these conditions into conformity with God's will, who is all good, and who ordains only that which is for good if his children leave his plans to be accomplished. In all your trials, great and small, turn them into good ; either by active endeavour to remove the evil which produces them, or by a quiet submission of your own will to the great Father."

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THE LOVE OF GOD.

[MARCH 11, 1883.]

. . . "Gradually the light breaks. We must be prepared, or we shall be unable to bear the light. God's Holy Influence will guide our thought, and the revelation will gradually dawn upon our sight. We know that there will come from these Messages an eternal fruition.

"We can now tell you of one of the mysteries of our life. We know the Heavenly Messenger is coming. We know that only the thin veil of our imperfection will hide from us a heavenly and awful presence. Yet when he comes every sense will be stirred as with surprise. We shall have, united, a sense of satisfied expectation, and yet of wonder. Here we enjoy the good things granted us without satiety; their delights do not pall, nor lessen by custom, or use; the bloom of the first pleasure does not fade, but endures continually. This is one of the mysteries of our life as compared with yours."

[It was asked by what means they know of the coming of a "Messenger," and upon the purport of his message before its actual delivery?]

"It is in the air. We know, how we know we know not. Our being is pervaded with a sweet and thrilling influence, by which we are made to feel the

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nature of the teaching we await. It is an influence such as we, in our degree, may exercise over those in Earth-life."

[*By another :*] "Be sure of one thing : whatever may befall, God is leading you to happiness by the easiest road. Happiness is the natural result of the fulfilment of God's will, which continually increases throughout eternity as your expanding souls grow in capacity for good. God's eternity is the measure of yours, and the spiritual life, born from the knowledge of spiritual things, is heaven begun." [*A pause.*]

"If your eyes were opened you would see the great company that is now gathering about us ; for we, with you, await a blessing."

[*A long silence ensued, when the following was communicated in a measured form, as if dictated sentence by sentence :*]

“Behold the Love of God !

“Behold Him who is uncreated Love, unbounded by time, or space ; who has loved you with an everlasting love ; who is the God of love, and worthy of all love.

“Behold Him whose love is Life ; whose life is Love ; who binds all spheres in one by the unity of the Spirit, by the bond of a common paternity, by the hope of a common inheritance.

“The home of His children is in the Heart of God, who fills all worlds ; realise His sacred presence in

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the inner sanctuary of your secret life, so may you now begin to possess Him, whom to know is the bliss of heaven. Press onward to the goal, the crown of reward, gazing steadfastly on the love of the eternal Father, till He receives all those who are perfected by patience into the inheritance of the children of God. Then shall happiness be changed into heavenly joy, when He makes manifest the glory that encompasses His throne. Then shall you know the serene stillness of a soul that rests in God, the rapture of doing Him service, the ethereal calm of a will united to the Divine. Then shall you be tranquilised, gladdened, refreshed and satisfied, with the fruition of God; for He, the everlasting God, will be All in all.

‘ “O King of all beauty and glory, we desire no inheritance beside Thee.” ’

[On a subsequent occasion the following was communicated:]

‘ “ These Messages are a great blessing to us all, for they come from the source of All Good. We know that he who brought these words of comfort is God’s Messenger. God is love, and by the exercise of the love of God we call around us those who stand before the Great Author of love.

“ When you exercise the love of God in your hearts then you may expect the blessing of those who stand in His immediate presence. And we likewise stand and watch and wait to help forward those who, in

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Earth-life, seek the presence of our common Father, who is ever ready to bless his children."

[On another occasion it was asked:]

Who was the messenger who gave those words?

"St. Stephen."

How was this known?

"We were told by those who came before, and those who followed after, the martyr.

"They who come out from God's presence are Messengers, whose joyful service it is to bring life to the souls of men. They are God's instruments for making conscious in man the operation of the Spirit.

"The teaching of old, which came in like manner to the beloved of the Lord, has its echo in our hearts. Beloved, now are we the children of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when He, our King, our Master, our Leader, the divine Son of God, shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is, and the light of His purity will pervade our souls and conform us to His likeness; not only as by the reflection of His image, but the influence of His purity and beauty and virtue will be communicated to our natures.

"A magnetic virtue of healing went out from Him when he dwelt on Earth, and a virtue of sanctification goes out from him now to those to whom He draws near."

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THE PEACE OF GOD.

[DECEMBER 28, 1884.]

. . . “ We feel the pressure of a solemn influence, as if our thoughts were restrained that some higher power may find expression when perfect harmony is established. We dare not be too confident that this will be in words, but we are sure that a higher presence will make itself felt.

“ We know only in part, and are conscious of the unworthiness and imperfection of the means by which this higher influence can reach you. Holiness of heart can alone render us meet channels for such gifts. The knowledge that the treasure, though given in earthen vessels, is not lessened by contact with weakness and imperfection, does not do away with the feeling that an unworthy attitude of mind unfits us for a great duty.

“ Here we are ever striving for a fuller knowledge of God. The desire for God is the first principle of our spiritual being, as the contemplation of Him is the end of all our hopes.”

[*By another.*] “ The light that now shines on you

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imposes on you a deeper responsibility for these gifts of God. If you find deep, deep in your hearts the desire for God, for the knowledge and love of God, you must not dare to hold these gifts lightly, as if they were dependent on your will. They are implanted in you by God, to whom you must render account. But the dealings of God with you are from a Father, not a taskmaster."

[*By another:*] "Be calm and trustful; the end is not yet. But that which you earnestly strive for, even if not attained in your present sphere, will be granted in fullest measure in the day that God appoints." [*A pause.*]

"A word will come to you from beyond!

"When God's Messengers come to us we must bid farewell to sense and sight. All here is in the realm of faith. Faith alone can pierce the cloud and penetrate the thick darkness in which, because of our weakness and imperfection, God is veiled."

[*A long silence, after which these words followed :*] "There standeth one amongst you that you know not!

' "Peace on Earth, good will to men.

' "Even the peace of God, which shall possess and satisfy your souls; for He is the end of all your aspirations and desires, the port of the wanderer, the home of the exile, the fulfilment of your love.

' "Lift up your hearts, fear nothing, for His love is

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around you. By purity and love prepare His tabernacle, walking in His presence go on to perfection till your life, being conformed to His will, is no longer yours, but His.

‘ “He makes you partakers of His nature ; in you He wills to dwell, that He may be made manifest to the world, and that His invisible glory may be revealed. Open your hearts to Him, that He may rest and dwell in you, and fill you with the gifts of love. Unite your weakness to His strength, your imperfection to His holiness ; bear your human griefs with Him who traveled the hard road of sorrow even to the death of the cross ; trust all to His guiding hand, and rest in the Peace of God. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but His kindness shall not depart from you, neither shall the covenant of His peace be removed, saith the Lord, who hath mercy upon you.” ’

MESSAGES OF GRACE.

. . . “Nothing unites us so closely as our receiving these wonderful words together, for they are the very Life of life. We have our own inward revealings, as you may have in the Earth-life; but these spoken words, which come to us in clear and distinct form, that you may receive them, are more to us than the still small voice. God speaks silently to the silent heart, but in these Messages of Grace He speaks as a Father to His children, and we believe that we can hear in them the very tones of the Divine Love. These occasions quicken into a most intense and vivid emotion our desire for God. Of this we are deeply conscious even when resting in anticipation. What we feel when the blessing is in the act of bestowal cannot be expressed in words.”

What is the nature of the intimation you receive in anticipation of the gift?

“The knowledge that a revelation, or instruction from a higher sphere, is coming to us, is, as we said before, conveyed by unknown channels. It is an in-

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fluence that compels us to deep solemnity and a feeling of devotion. This influence seems to pervade our spiritual atmosphere. We are impelled to resign ourselves to it by subduing every feeling of self-will or self-interest. All personal affections are absorbed in the desire to lay our souls open, passively, to the influence of the Messenger. The love of God fills our hearts, and we dwell on the knowledge we have of Him, and of His goodness. Our whole being is, for the time, devoted to this intention. The words vaguely fill the air till the moment of the delivery of the Message. When he speaks it is to us as an actual union with the Divine. You have it faintly shadowed in the highest aspiration you may know in prayer and spiritual communion. But for you, in the flesh, it is impossible to experience, in equal degree, this melting of the individual nature into the highest Being of God, realising a union with the Infinite."

Do the Messages always come to you in actual words?

"When they are designed for you in Earth-life they do, and are given in plainest form, that you may be able to receive them. At other times we have communion by thought. These Messages are primarily for you in trust. When you read them aloud we have a sense of the influence of the higher ones who bring them."

What are your impressions of them, the Messengers?

"They seem to be in a state of absolute rest and

MESSAGES OF GRACE

calm, for their understanding and will are united to the Divine by love. We do not think of them as obedient to God, but as united to Him. Their time of discipline, as we think of discipline, is past, and they are ever actively engaged in the accomplishment of God's will. There is no more taking up of the cross, or conquering of self, but in doing God's will they continually advance—for he that watereth shall be watered himself. If they recall their past on Earth, even in faintest memory, they must be filled with a sense of their own unworthiness and cover their faces before Him. But for them penitence is of the past. Wherein they serve God except in ministering to His children we know not.

“You may think of us as calm and sheltered, and so we are from the physical trials that beset you, for they lie behind us. But in our difficulties and struggles we look forward to the next step we shall take, hoping that there we shall find complete rest. But only in the teachings of the highest are we told of a state of perfect peace; and even then it is not the peace of completed work, but of unity with the will of God.

“We are quite able to perceive degrees of perfection among those who have passed beyond into the higher spheres. Some of them seem as far above us as the stars of heaven are above you; but all are bound together in an unbroken chain, forever ascending.

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“ The further we advance, the more gladly we dwell on the thought of eternity, in which we may ever grow nearer to God—‘ Oh, blessed, endless eternity, wherein shall grow continually the love of the Holy Will of God.’ ”

[*A pause of some moments.*] “ My mother, who guides my power when I am communing with you, is going to speak with you by me. She has passed beyond all the surroundings that still keep us near the Earth-sphere ; but she can, by me, give you her own words.” [*A pause.*]

“ I will speak to you by my son.

“ The Angels come to visit you, to give you a glimpse of your Home, and to draw your hearts thither.

“ Learn what is the Vision of Peace which the Blessed see, when the storms of Earth-life are past, and we stand on the threshold of our true and everlasting Home.

“ We behold the Eternal Truth as you behold the light of the sun—without intention, or effort. God gives to each of us, in our measure, of Himself ; we partake of His nature, and share in the work of the Father’s House.

“ Without, you still have to fight with evil. Within, strengthened by conflict, the sheltered soul grows in the grace and beauty of holiness. Wait in hope, till, attaining all you now long for, you rest in the sight of God and are filled with His overflowing love.” ’

MESSAGES OF GRACE

[*The former resuming* :] “ This is a rare power, seldom available—that which links those beyond us directly with you in the Earth-life. There must be a sympathetic chain making the means of communion continuous and unbroken through three distinct spheres. These conditions, necessary for conscious intercourse, are not essential in spiritual communion. In moments of exalted aspiration you are fitted to hold with the higher spheres a communion that is more real, because it is more spiritual. Then you may experience an essential union, the true intercourse of spirit with spirit through the unity of the Spirit of God—which is ‘ wider than human life, and deeper than human need.’ ”

. . . .

THE BLESSED.

[In reply to questions asked concerning "the Blessed," the following was communicated :]

"We know so much as this : that what we long for, and make an effort to see, is poured forth before them without check, or hindrance. But we believe they are ever earnestly seeking for a further manifestation, for something beyond what is possible for them to communicate to us.

"The Divine within us is ever seeking to free itself from limitation ; and this must still be so, in their degree, even with those who dwell in the higher spheres. Each stage of life, while passing, must seem limited according to its ideal standard, but in every successive stage the sight is ever growing clearer, while the aims and aspirations are continually expanding. Your struggle is for freedom ; ours is for purity, especially that purity which belongs to the attainment of higher virtue rather than the laying down of definite sin. Purity is the abandonment of the creature for

THE BLESSED

the Creator , seeking happiness alone in the presence of Light and Holiness.”

[*By another :*] “ Each spirit, we, or you, or others of a higher sphere, serving God as He appoints, is part of a Divine order, and the purpose each has to fulfil is a sacred work. God needs each one, and he has an end to accomplish by each one. Is your life a struggle to accomplish something ? If not, it is no life at all. The light is given that you may follow it wherever it leads ; not merely are you to rest in its contemplation.”

[*The former, resuming, after a pause :*] “ You cannot realise what power is now being put forth to enable this means to be complete for the expression of a word from beyond. Only for a time does a wave of force and light put it in our power to act thus consciously on you ; for, as you know, it is a question of times and seasons, and now we are concentrating all our strength.”

[*After a silence the following was communicated :*]

“ “ God, the eternal Giver of Life, delights in the free-will offering of love. Yield yourselves to Him, whose Divine Will is the law of our world. Cast all your love and desires and purposes and aims and hopes into that unknown Will, till He draws you to Himself. He will take you beyond the reach of weakness and fear. The light of truth and knowledge will shine on you. Around you shall be shed joy everlast-

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

ing, flowing forth from the encompassing flood of the Love of God.

“ To the lover of purity and the seeker after good, every good gift shall be given. All good gifts are from the Father of Light. The word of the Father of spirits, the King of the true Kingdom, is your rock of hope.’ ”

THE LIGHT OF GOD.

[MAY 16, 1885.]

. . . “We must prepare our hearts when we hope for direct communion with the Saints. We avoid all distractions, whether of companionship or thought. We perform all our duties with a quiet thought of the gift we hope for. Maintaining silence, outward and inward, we speak only with those who share our aspirations. Our thoughts being thus restrained, as by a calm and passive resting in God, we find ourselves prepared to receive the great gift.

“All are gathering, for we know that the heavens will soon be opened.”

[A long silence ensued, when the following words were communicated slowly, as if dictated sentence by sentence :]

‘ “I, the Messenger of God, come from the land of light and beauty.

‘ “I come in the name of the Light of the World, in whom the distant is drawn near, and before whose presence darkness and sorrow and sighing have fled away.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

“ Lift up your hearts, for upon your seeking spirits shines the Light of God, brighter, clearer, purer, diviner than hath entered into the heart of man to conceive, and in that Holy Light each thought and act is revealed.

“ Draw near to God, who dwelleth in light, veiled in the brightness of His infinite glory from the eyes of His creatures; fall down before Him and open your hearts to the influences of His Spirit.

“ Set your affections on the things which are of God, on the infinite, the abiding, the eternal; these only are worthy of your love, for you are made only for Him, and to become like Him is your heavenly heritage. Render humbly to Him the sacrifice of your will, striving for the angelic constancy of obedience, and His love will draw you near and blend your wills in harmony with His divine will. Let the joys of earth become to you but the shadows of the true; lay down your earthly cares, look up to that pure Light, the source of perfectness and peace, and its beams shall kindle in your hearts the love of God, in whose presence and blessing you shall forever rest.

“ To you shall be granted a foretaste of the reward of those who love with singleness of heart; you shall conceive of sweet delights which absorb and transport the spirit—freed from the burden of the flesh—whose desires are fixed on things eternal. So shall God show you Himself, and all things in Himself. He will dispel all darkness and ignorance and imperfection,

THE LIGHT OF GOD

and shall bring you out of the uncertainty of hopes and questionings, into the desire and love and light of wisdom. There, in that celestial Light, all joy, all happiness is found. Out of His treasury are shed forth heavenly blessings for the portion of all those who will open their hearts to receive the gift of His love, and to rejoice in the blessing of the Mighty God. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the plenteousness of His House, and He shall make them to drink of His pleasures as of a river.

‘ “ O, Lord of Hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee ! ” ’

[Subsequently the following was communicated in reply to questions asked :]

“ A cloud of witnesses filled the air when your great gift came. When we receive, with you, these revelations from above, we are filled with thanksgiving, and cherish the lingering influence long after the voice has passed away. For it opens to us the gate of heaven.

“ These Messages link us with the saints, and aid us in holding a more intimate intercourse with them. After such a gift we cling to the influence that still hovers about us, uplifting our minds, if not taking possession. Let us desire further illumination, and be very jealous of any interest which may disturb our thought—‘ Lord, it is good to be here ! ’ ‘ I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me. ’ ”

. . . .

BEYOND THE VEIL.

. . . “The thoughts and feelings inspired by the Messages are so deeply engraven on our hearts that we can trace in each other their effect. A distinct step seems taken in our spiritual life. They influence all our motives, our every thought and act. Having told you of our preparation for these gifts, I now tell you of our attitude after receiving them.”

[*By another :*] “God always grants you that to which you aspire, the measure of knowledge that is meet for you. You cannot look beyond the veil, but just enough light shines through to show you there is a veil. And if you press forward earnestly, and take joyfully each new ray that is shed forth, the veil will dissolve before your eyes, and you will be filled with a new measure of light and wisdom and glory. For the spirit advances ever, piercing the clouds it attains new heights, sees new treasures within its reach, and passes from glory to glory.”

[*By another :*] “Trial and suffering and humiliation have a real value for one who has learned to measure all things by the standard of eternity ; they detach the mind from earthly things, and instil a desire to be-

BEYOND THE VEIL

come fit for a higher work. But that which makes life smooth and pleasant veils the heavenly horizon. Remember!"

[*By another :*] "Live ever in the knowledge of the love of the Highest, for love turns the crown of thorns into one of gold, and under its light the wave of trouble flashes with heavenly brightness. Love rules the Infinite Heart, and they who yield to the dominion of love bear the seal of sonship. [*A pause.*] We hear a voice from beyond."

"Now is your night, but the morning cometh.

"They who live in Spirit, in the light of the resplendent City of God, need never shrink from His Messengers, at whatever hour, or under whatever strange form they may come.

"We draw near, and nearer still, to the presence of the Divine Father, in sure confidence that we shall at length rest in the eternal temple of peace. God is the eternal fulness, whose goodness is ever overflowing. On earth was the seed-time, now is the spring-tide of blossom, and hereafter shall be the harvest. Then the twilight gloomed around us; beyond us glows the everlasting light. In some happier future we shall know that this, our high noon of blessing, was but the seed-time of a more glorious ingathering of the harvest of truth."

THE VISION OF PEACE.

[JUNE 21, 1885.]

.. . “ Our minds now blend harmoniously, and we look on this unity as one of the clearest signs of progress. We are many, yet one; and in this bond you are united with us.

“ They who have begun the spiritual life on Earth are wonderfully stimulated by the beauty and goodness to which their eyes are opened when they come here, and this lends an effective force to their effort to overcome all obstacles to progress. This early, eager impulse, gradually subsides into steadfast, persistent endeavour, and becomes calmer as we advance. . . Our surroundings all tend to promote the good and expel the evil, often unconsciously to ourselves. When the need of effort grows less, then we know we are advancing. . . The reward of obedience is the inward manifestation of the Divine Presence, and the joy and triumph of having overcome the world. . . Self-love and self-will stand between the heart and God. Com-

THE VISION OF PEACE

mit your way to Him, and trust in Him wholly, for He brings all to pass. [*A pause.*]

“Above us is the light which betokens a heavenly presence. We dare not dispel the power now by individual messages, but all unite in saying: Live ever in the realisation of the true spiritual life, the invisible kingdom of Truth and Love; now no longer hidden from you, but the real home of the soul.”

[*After a prolonged silence the following was communicated:*]

“Prepare your hearts!

“He passeth by who is the hidden God.

“The shadowing veil is lifted; He passeth by who is the King of Love.”

“With the adoring host of the Blessed He reveals to you the special Presence of the great invisible One, and with still small voice He murmurs to the soul divine secrets, beyond the power of human utterance.

“Commit your way to God, and stay your heart on the Eternal. Dwell here and now and ever in the true home of your waiting hearts, in the heavenly eden of peace, and rejoice in the love of God with His living children.

“Awake, O Winds of God! breathe on us the Breath of Life, and bear our oblation of praise to the Throne of Light.

“Open to us, O loving Master, the higher mansions of purity and blessedness, where Thou abidest ever,

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that we may rejoice continually in Thy beauty and glory, and dwell in the paradise of delights where shines the Day of God.” ’

[After a solemn stillness a vision ensued, and the following words were spoken with great calmness and gentleness, as if to each one separately :]

“PEACE BE WITH YOU: MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU.”

TEACHINGS BY SPIRITUAL GUIDES.

[In reply to questions relative to their own experience on that great occasion, the following was communicated :]

“You are to bear two words in mind when you dwell on that last gift. One is, ‘Your joy no man can take from you :’ and the other is, ‘Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift.’

“This is one of the many good things that come by earnest seeking. The steadfast endeavour of all earnest will is never in vain.

“The revelation of what was coming dawned on us suddenly and unexpectedly. There was the sense of a higher influence, and a quickening of the power exerted over us by the Blessed. Then, suddenly, a consciousness of the presence of the Messengers amongst us, with the promise of our highest blessing. All the holy ones we know of, or can conceive of, seemed to encompass us with their power, heralding the coming of One who is their Master and King.

“‘Prepare your hearts,’ was spoken by those imme-

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diately beyond us. Then came the words of the messenger who brought your first great Message. He spoke in plainest words. The Message that was written in flame, was from the higher order, unitedly, beginning with the words, 'Commit your way to God,' and who were influenced to give it by a greater than they. Their offering of praise was spoken; and the petition that followed it came to us in the words of the Blessed.

"The Blessing of Peace—we need not tell you its source, even had your eyes been holden.

"We receive these higher revelations only in the presence of those who are still in the Earth-life; God having so ordered it that 'we without you should not be made perfect.' He manifests Himself in different ways amongst the different orders of His children, and it is only when all are united by an intense interest, which really is unity of will, that a perfect vision, or manifestation of Him, can be given. We know, too, that the Blessed never receive their highest gifts except when some of us, in the spirit land, are united with them in thought and heart. Those who are far beyond the Blessed, whose will is in perfect and absolute harmony with the Divine, dwell continually in the Vision of Peace.

"We have twice before seen this Great Vision in your presence, but our power over you was not then sufficient for us to convey it to you. One occasion was when you received your third great Message—

TEACHINGS BY SPIRITUAL GUIDES

‘Behold the Love of God.’ The other occasion was just before the long interruption, when those few words were given from on high—‘Strive, strive, strive, till hope brightens into sight and rest is won. The Promise of God standeth sure.’ Had you but known it, the promise was then certain that at a coming day the blessing of His conscious Presence would be yours.

“Sight is rarely given to those in Earth-life. Those with us here to whom it has not yet been granted to see, as we now see, are conscious only of a feeling of deep solemnity and awe, without a knowledge of the wonderful Presence which inspires them. Had you dissipated your thought with attention to external manifestations in this intercourse, even in the slightest degree, you would have been incapable of supplying the link we need with Earth-life, and you would have been far removed from the possibility of sharing with us this great and wonderful blessing.” . .

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INTERMEDIATE SPHERES.

[*The following was in reply to questions asked concerning the various "spheres" of the intermediate state :*]

. . . "All conflict must be over before we can pass from this sphere to a higher one. There is a great difference between that willing obedience to God's will which can be attained in its completeness here, and that perfect conscious unity with it after which the Blessed strive, and which even there is not attained in its perfection."

[*The question was asked, mentally, whether they recognised more than three general stages, or "spheres," of which some knowledge had been gained through previous intercourse : namely, the "spirit, world," the sphere of "the Blessed," and that celestial realm from whence the "Messengers" came forth. It was answered :*]

"We know from those who influence us (the Blessed) that there is between their world and that of the great ones at least one sphere, which bears the same

INTERMEDIATE SPHERES

relation to their life (the Blessed) that ours does to the Earth-life."

What are your chief means of progress?

"There are many and various functions necessary to the development of the human soul, duties which you recognise as pertaining to physical, mental, and social life. But with us, here, the training and discipline of the *spirit* is our absorbing interest; and as violent transitions are hurtful in our world, as in yours, this training is at first accomplished by means of duties connected either with the Earth-life, or with those who are lowest in the spirit-world. The perfecting of the spirit is our means of progress."

What is the nature of the change in passing from sphere to sphere?

"The change in passing from this sphere to the one beyond is greater than the change you will experience when you pass into this life; it is more marked; but less so, we are told, when those beyond us pass into a still higher sphere. All conflict must be over, as I have said, before we can pass into the next sphere."

What relation does one sphere bear to another?

"We have learned that each stage of life has its two spheres, linked together in the same relation that exists between what you call the material and the spiritual worlds. But in our intercourse with higher spheres little is told us of what would correspond to the idea of physical or material conditions there, for most of us have but little interest in that inquiry com-

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pared to the things that relate to our spiritual progress, and we know that such knowledge cannot be clearly conveyed. Now we would turn away from these thoughts, for they do not concern our real life." . .

[*By another :*] " If it is God's will, in drawing you to the spiritual life, to use an outward ministration, as well as the silent influence of His Messengers, the weakest instrument is the fittest, for then it is manifest that you must look to a power beyond yourselves for these communications, and there is less temptation to self-exaltation, less danger of self-deception, and of necessity you look to the Father of all, invisibly working by human means, and manifesting His Presence by organs borrowed from his creatures.

" God shows you Himself. He does not need to show you how to approach Him, or how to serve and worship Him, for the knowledge of Him calls forth a response from your hearts. He reveals what He is, and this revelation of the Divine Fullness is infinite in duration and development ; for His gifts partake of the infinity and eternity of His love. Such a gift as you have received was a direct ray from His sacred Presence, kindling inner light."

[*By another, in reply to a question :*] " The natural effect of Earth-life is a tendency to limit thought by things human and finite. You are inclined to dwell too much in the sense of time, as implied in Eternal Life. Earnest effort and the desire for good is Eternal Life, for it is a partaking of the nature of the

INTERMEDIATE SPHERES

Eternal One, who wills only good, whom we seek to approach, and whom to know is Eternal Life.”

. . . .

THE LIGHT OF HOPE.

[AUGUST 16, 1885.]

. . . “ A new influence is present, controlling the power. I cannot name it. He has a special end in view and dictates from a distance. I will interpret his thought in my own words, for the power is given in a strange form :

“ Those who have suffered struggle and conflict are better fitted for higher work in the next spheres, they who have borne the burden and heat of the day, who are strengthened by trial, they do here a work for God and draw the world to a knowledge of His truth. Each has a special blessing ; the strong do a divine work, while those who dwell in innocence and peace aid with their prayers, and in the end shall crown with their love the victor in many conflicts.

“ Now he speaks. I will give you his own words

“ Let all earthly care be as nothing ; welcome as blessings the evils of life ; see in its sadness, joy ; and in its thorns, a crown ; for by them the Hand of God is moulding you to do work in His higher kingdom.

THE LIGHT OF HOPE

He purifies by outward fire the inward evil ; He draws the heart from a world of weariness and care, to find eternal peace and rest in Him. His love is everywhere, and always, round you. But now, with love surpassing all, more tender, more intense, more loving than heart can conceive, He overshadows you with His personal Presence, and breathes on you power and life. In that Presence is fulness of joy, of glory, power, wisdom ; only the dim shadow can be seen, but all is there, proceeding from Him, abiding in Him ; and in endless happiness you will one day receive it all through His Love. In the calm moment of His Presence the clouds of Earth will part and reveal a glimpse of the Heavenly Land illumined with the pure Love of God.” ’

[A pause of some minutes duration.]

“ We see the bright light that surrounds the Messenger. We see only by the will of those who come, not by our own power.

“ The Presence is coming amongst us, and likewise a great company of those who share our gifts. For ONE will come.”

[A long silence ensued, the following being given in another form :]

‘ “ He draws near who is the Light of Hope, the Crown of Day ; He who is the perfection of wisdom, who sees the deepest meaning of hidden mystery.

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‘ “ His coming is heralded with celestial light, for He is the leader of the armies of God’s angels, who go forth to conquer all evil with the power of Love and Truth.

‘ “ Here is that Divine Heart which lives for you ; He who comes to lighten sorrow and care ; He who has ever loved you.” ’

[A silence ensued, followed by a Vision, in which the following words were audibly spoken :]

“ IF YE LOVE ME, YE SHALL BE LOVED OF GOD ;
AND I WILL LOVE YOU, AND MANIFEST MYSELF
TO YOU.’

THE TREE OF LIFE.

[JANUARY 3, 1886.]

. . . “No preparation for these gifts is so effectual as a life of active charity and inward faith. A blessing is only awaiting the complete establishment of the power, to be given you. We all are waiting with you, for we never receive these gifts in such full measure as when we are made the channel of blessing for those in Earth-life.”

[*By another :*] “Sorrow and care may truly be said to be turned into joy for those who live the life of the Spirit, because your penalty has then become your purification. Trials do their work of conforming your will to the Divine. They who earnestly seek patience and a calm spirit, and consent to bear whatever burdens are laid upon them, soon reap the first fruits by that restful calm with which they encounter whatever may befall them in the day of their appointed time. Thus are earthly things united with heavenly, and by the infusion of angelic peace and good will are you made partakers of the life of the Blessed.”

[*After a silence the following was communicated ‘from the sphere of the Blessed’ :*]

“A Light shall arise in obscurity, and darkness shall

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be as the noonday ; for around you shines the light of a brighter land, and those who draw near to you dwell among the angels, and are fulfilled with the Vision of Peace.

‘ “ Let the true Light find in your spirits a quiet abiding place ; so shall it enrich the barren pathway of care which leads to the Land of Peace, and shines ever more and more till dawns for you the Perfect Day.

‘ “ For you have passed through the Gate of Life ; woe and conflict have ceased to affright you, and eternal refreshment has begun. Soon shall you see what now you believe, possess what you now desire, and attain to the joys of the life of the Blessed. Here the hunger of the spirit is stilled ; here is found its peaceful rest ; here, perfectly renewed, each power blossoms into fullest life and is offered in service to the King of our love.

‘ “ Here the depths of the heart are sounded ; here the forces of the spirit unfolded ; here the aspirations of humanity attain fullest perfection under the enkindling light of the Vision of God.

‘ “ Look forward through the endless path of life which has opened before you, wherein you shall rejoice ever in the Love of God, till, united to Him, you possess Him wholly, and share His fullness for evermore.” ’

THE TREE OF LIFE

[*Several voices, unitedly, from the sphere of the Blessed :*]

“Come! spirits of light and beauty; come! visions of purity, encircling band of Heaven’s own brightness; come from that Celestial Land, and give us, who wait in longing, a glimpse of your changeless peace, who dwell in the unveiled Presence of God.”’

[*By one voice—a Messenger :*] “He who is encompassed with ineffable light shall so infuse Himself into your spirits that His Presence may be made manifest in your midst. He will nourish and sustain you, and fill you with the joys of Paradise.”’

[*By many angels :*] “Hail! O Holy, Living Life, whose unsearchable wisdom disposes all things in perfect order. Hail! Thou Fountain of life and beauty, who sheds forth blessing forever. Guide and preserve Thy children who call on Thee, and shelter them through the storms which are bringing them daily nearer to the haven of rest and glory.”’

[*A silence ensued, followed by a Vision, in which the following words were audibly spoken :*]

“TO HIM THAT OVERCOMETH I WILL GIVE OF THE FRUIT OF THE TREE OF LIFE, IN THE MIDST OF THE PARADISE OF GOD.”

A PARTING WORD.

“Lift your eyes to the hills of light, the dawning Day is at hand. Go forth on your mission fearlessly; God’s is the Hand which guides you onward. Manifest your light to man, the creature of His Hand, who now gropes in darkness and despair.

“O, Divine Light, that illumines the path of the beloved of God. Work while it is called to-day, for night cometh, and with the night comes rest to the faithful soul.”

From whom are these words?

“The Sent of God.”

[*This channel of prophecy was closed with these words, on a subsequent occasion:*] “Waiting for the dawn; the Day breaks so gradually, sending forth these rays, and then again obscured. But that the fullest Day is at hand we know, and give thanks.

“Those living words fill all voids and abide forever—‘To him that overcometh.’ And this, even this very thing is the victory that overcometh the world—even our faith. Every sorrow and care and trial but proves

A PARTING WORD

our faith that God is good, the Father and King of Love."

[*By another, in reply to a question :*] " The highest, noblest faith does not act regardless of time and opportunity ; it waits till the harvest, and then takes a place among the reapers. . . The better prepared is the field, the stronger will be the growth of the seed, and the world is rapidly being made more ready to receive these glad tidings of great joy."

[*By another :*] " The mission of the human race is to mould the world to a likeness of the Kingdom of Heaven, and by giving to others this glimpse of the spiritual world you help them to realise the continual Presence of God—the most powerful check to evil and stimulus to good."

[*By another :*] " Remember that the echoes of Truth never die ; they sound on forever, beyond the narrow limits of your own circle, your own age, your own race.

" Look not too far forward, either with longing, or with fear ; to-morrow will dawn with to-morrow's light. Could you but know our peace in trust and faith !"

[*By another :*] " We look forward to a day of rejoicing when we shall see in Earth-life an impulse go forth from those Messages of Grace. For we see in them the promise of a blessed future, the promise of still larger benefits that must arise from this beginning. We know, but only in part, that this is the first step in

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a new movement from these spheres to yours in Earth-life. And when we have realised a strength which we shall see has originated here, then we shall go on from strength to strength, and God will give the increase ; so that, by His help and guidance, this shall be a means of bringing many into His Kingdom."

THE END.

“ For this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that when ye received from us the word of the Message, even the word of God, ye accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in Truth, the word of God, which also effectually worketh in you that believe.”

I. Thessalonians II., 13.

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